

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 81 – DISABILITY AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

Throughout this document the word disability will be used to describe students with a disability as described in the Equality Act (2010) this includes:

- Students with long term physical and mental health conditions
- Students with sensory and or physical impairments
- Students with neurodiversities such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, ADHD

Providing access to education and learning to a wide and diverse body of students is an integral principle of Arden University's operating ethos. Its modes of delivering higher education are designed with the diverse needs of students in mind and to provide students with flexibility and choice to help overcome some of the barriers they may face to learning. The University also recognises that individual students may have specific disabilities that may require additional support and reasonable adjustments to be made. This policy sets out the principles by which reasonable adjustments will be made in dialogue and consultation with the student.

Arden University is committed to dealing in a fair and considerate manner with disabled students and where possible make reasonable adjustments to its operating procedures, whilst maintaining the integrity of the academic standards and quality of the qualifications it offers.

Students who would like reasonable adjustments, can make their disability known by the following means: at the point of application; during the annual registration task; to Student Support or the Inclusion team this may be before study commences or at any point in their studies. Arden's Inclusion team (student disability) will assess the student's needs and the implications for study. Where appropriate, evidence may be required to support a request for reasonable adjustments.

### **1. Reasonable adjustments to Assessment**

Reasonable adjustments to assessments will be assessed on an individual basis, based on individual need, and may include, but are not limited to:

1. Extra time in Time constrained assessments (TCAs) and Multiple-Choice questionnaires (MCQs)
2. Exam arrangements
3. Alternative assessments
4. Pre-approved 7-day extensions

#### **1.1 Extra time in TCAs and MCQs**

Students with disabilities may request support for scheduled TCAs and MCQs by emailing the Inclusion team on [Inclusion@arden.ac.uk](mailto:Inclusion@arden.ac.uk). The Inclusion team will also email all

students with a declared disability before an upcoming MCQ or TCA to ask if adjustments are required.

Requests for extra time should be made at the earliest opportunity be made by or at least 4 weeks before the MCQ or TCA is scheduled to run. Any request received and approved later than this date, may permit the student to mitigate the attempt for that block and allow the extra time arrangements to be implemented for the following block. See point 3 on Extenuating circumstances below.

Where a TCA is usually open for 24 hours, the maximum extra time permitted will be one hundred percent equating to 24 extra hours.

Where an MCQ is scheduled to take 60 minutes and the time open for the student to access is 8 hours, the maximum extra time permitted will be based on an approved percentage of the scheduled time, for example 25% extra time will permit the student to have a total of 75 minutes to take the MCQ during the 8-hour window.

### 1.2 Alternative assessments

Students who require alternative assessments may request these by contacting the Inclusion team on [Inclusion@arden.ac.uk](mailto:Inclusion@arden.ac.uk). Inclusion advisers will make detailed recommendations and liaise with PTL for academic input with the approval for the alternative assessment to be approved by the Student Affairs Committee.

Unprecedented requests may be escalated to the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) where an adjustment may be seen to contradict the learning outcomes/competence standards.

### 1.3 Pre-approved 7-day extensions

Students with a declared disability may be recommended pre-approved 7-day extensions. These do not require the usual process as outlined in the [Extensions Policy](#). These extensions can be approved by an Inclusion adviser and or a Success Coach or Support Champion without the need for the student to submit a request form. Extensions may also be provided to students who are awaiting evidence as a temporary adjustment.

## 2. Sharing disability data and reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning

Students who would like to share their disability and potential learning barriers with their academic team can request this by contacting the Inclusion team on [Inclusion@arden.ac.uk](mailto:Inclusion@arden.ac.uk) Inclusion advisers (student disability) will make detailed recommendations for teaching and learning adjustments and share these with academics via the PowerBI reasonable adjustment report.

## 3. Extenuating Circumstances Affecting Student Assessment

Should circumstances arise that have a serious adverse effect on a disabled student's performance, which are unanticipated and beyond the student's control such as worsening of conditions which means that reasonable adjustments made to assessments

are not sufficient. The student should follow the [QA41 Extenuating Circumstances Affecting Student Assessment process](#). If the Inclusion team have medical evidence on file, they can provide essential details to support the extenuating circumstances request. New evidence will not be requested for fluctuating conditions.

Extenuating circumstances forms are available within the A-Z section on iLearn or from the Student Support and Inclusion teams. Students are strongly recommended to ensure that claims for extenuating circumstances are submitted to a member of the Student Support, success coach or Inclusion team for an initial check prior to formal consideration. All claims for extenuating circumstances are considered by the Student Affairs Committee in confidence.

#### 4. Break in Learning Policy

Should more longer-term medical conditions or bouts of issues from an existing disability occur, for which reasonable adjustments are not sufficient students can temporarily suspend their studies for a specified period of up to a maximum of 12 months through the [QA75 Break in Learning Policy](#). Breaks in learning cannot be backdated so students are advised to contact their Student Support Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity.

A break in learning form should be submitted to the Student Support Co-ordinator in the first instance, evidence is not required. Break in Learning requests are considered by the relevant Programme Team Leader with the outcome communicated by the Student Support team.

A break in learning may have implications for progression, study intensity, student finance and other issues which are outside of Arden University's control.

#### 5. Other support for Disabled Students

Disabled students who would like access to support whilst studying may be entitled to:

1. A fully funded initial diagnostic assessment of an SpLD including ADHD and autism
2. £200 contribution towards the cost of DSA equipment
3. Non-medical helper (NMH) support not provided through DSAs

5.1 Students who think they may have an SpLD but do not have any evidence should contact [Inclusion@arden.ac.uk](mailto:Inclusion@arden.ac.uk) to begin the screening process.

5.2 Students in receipt of DSAs but are not able to meet the costs of the £200 contribution for equipment can apply for help towards this through the Arden Blackbullion Hardship funds [Financial Support Bursary Scheme | Wellbeing Portal \(arden.ac.uk\)](#)

5.3 Students who require Non-medical helper support but cannot access this through DSAs may be eligible to this via University funded support and should contact [Inclusion@arden.ac.uk](mailto:Inclusion@arden.ac.uk) who will make an assessment and recommendations for support.

Eligibility:

To be eligible to apply for disability related support, students must meet the eligibility criteria for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) as set out below (extracted from Student Finance website).

Students with disabilities can apply for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs), for example of disabilities include:

- Long-term health condition
- Mental health condition
- Sensory or Physical impairment
- Specific learning difficulty like dyslexia or dyspraxia

In order to be eligible students must also:

- Be an undergraduate including foundation year or postgraduate student
- Be studying on a course that lasts at least a year
- Be studying on a course that has at least a 25% course intensity
- For an SpLD assessment students must have gone through a screening assessment with an Arden Inclusion Adviser

EU or international students are not eligible for DSA from Student Finance England but may be eligible for University funded support, EU or international students requiring support should contact [Inclusion@arden.ac.uk](mailto:Inclusion@arden.ac.uk) to enquire.

Policy Name:	Disability and Reasonable Adjustments Policy
Policy Reference:	QA81
Approval Authority:	Students, Quality and Standards Committee
Last Approved:	December 2023
Responsible SMT Lead:	PVC Student Experience
Responsible Department:	Student Experience
Policy Contact:	Debbie Groom, Head of Student Success ( <a href="mailto:dgroom@arden.ac.uk">dgroom@arden.ac.uk</a> )
Review Frequency:	3 years